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Putin Wins Presidency With Historic Record Number of Votes

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Vladimir Putin's runaway victory in Sunday's elections was supported by more voters than any other candidate in the history of Russia's presidential elections, according to the latest results published Monday.

With 99.98 percent of the ballots counted by Monday afternoon, Russia's Central Election Commission said Putin had gained 76.66 percent of the votes amidst a turn-out of 67.5 percent. Despite recorded incidents of ballot-stuffing and citizens being pressured to vote by employers, the commission said there were half as many reported electoral violations this year as in the last presidential campaign in 2012.

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"We are undeniably destined for success," Putin told his supporters in an address on Manezh

Square late Sunday after preliminary results were announced.

According to the official results published Monday, Putin received a total of 56.2 million votes, the most that any candidate has received in the seven presidential campaigns since the fall of the Soviet Union. The last record was set by Dmitry Medvedev in 2008, who won the presidency with 52.5 million votes.

Meanwhile, newcomer Pavel Grudinin's second-place showing with 11.8 percent marked the Communist Party's worst results in the post-Soviet era.

According to the official results, Putin received more than 92 percent of votes in Crimea, which was annexed from Ukraine by Russia four years ago, on March 18, 2014.

The number of Muscovites supporting Putin has doubled since the last elections, from 47 percent to 71 percent this year, while markedly increasing in Russia's second-largest city of St. Petersburg, from 59 percent to 75 percent.

Among Russian citizens registered to vote abroad, Putin received more than 84 percent of the vote, amidst a whopping 98 percent turnout rate.

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